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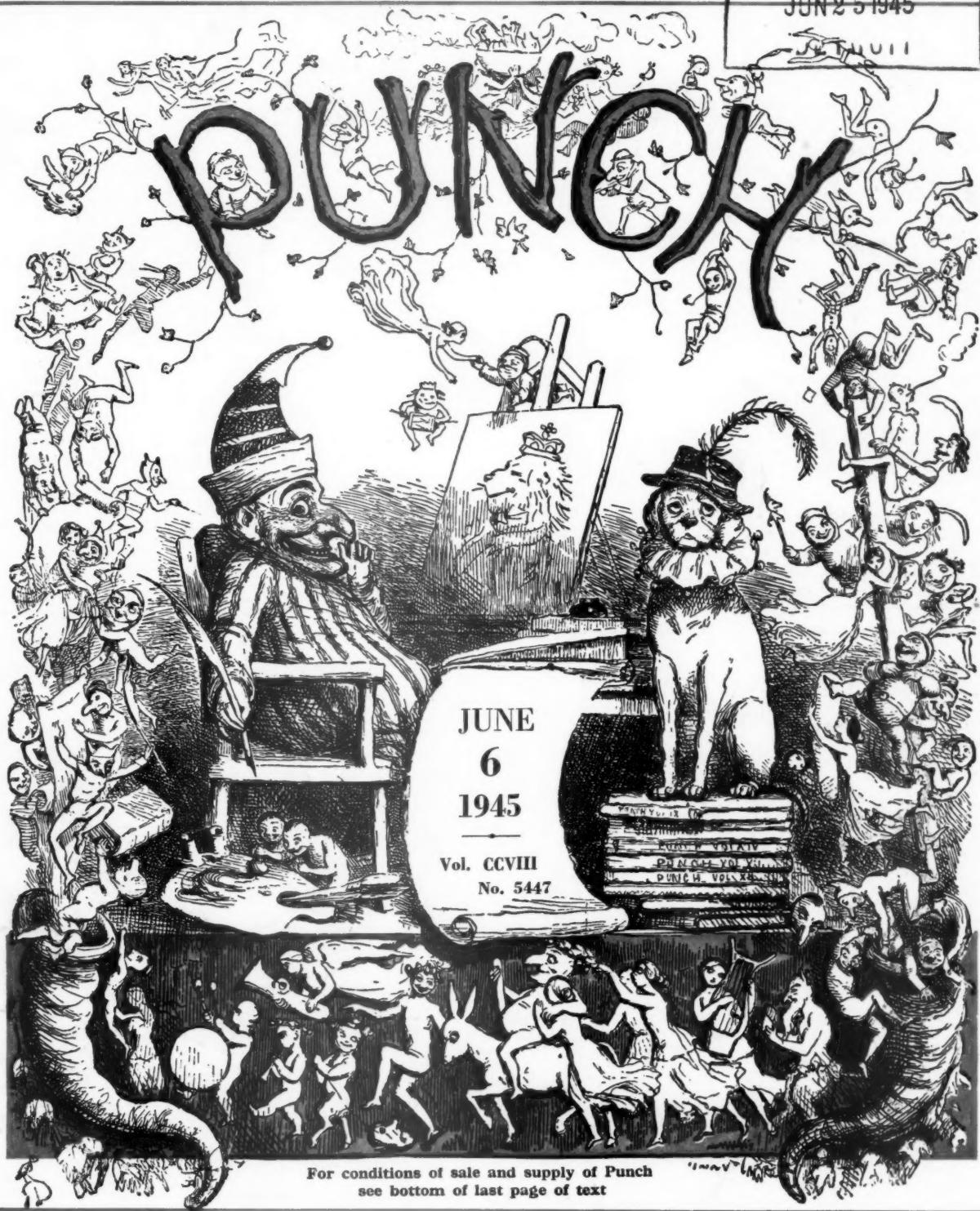
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COMPANY LTD

JUN 25 1945

PUNCH

For conditions of sale and supply of Punch
see bottom of last page of text**Imperial Typewriters**MADE IN
GREAT BRITAIN

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Well, this side of the world, and those not going East can begin planning their own private operations again. Interviewed yesterday, Captain Halftrack told us that the very day he called at the War Office for his bowler hat would later see him dug in at a caravanserai trading as the Slice and Niblick, adjacent to a golf course of great hazard and quality. Said the Captain: "Greens like chamois-leather—brassie lies which are absolutely Disney—and the short three was thought out by Torquemada. Where? No fear! But I don't mind telling you where I'm going first—for new tweeds and hefty shoes and so on . . . to



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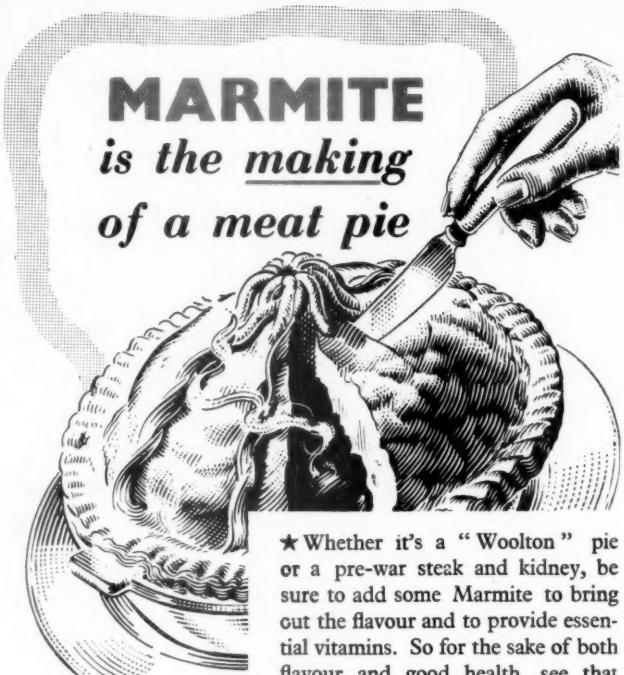
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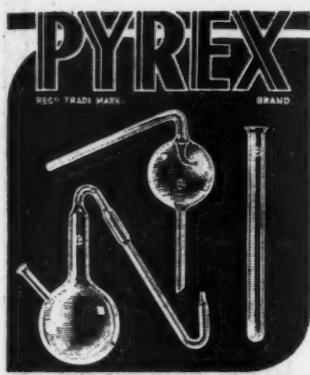
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*"All things come round to
him who will but wait"*

Schweppes

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LAGER**

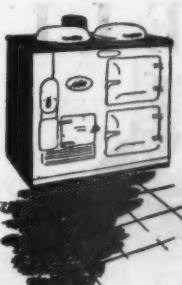
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Laurel blades—1½d. each includ-
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buy, and they'll give a smooth, easy
shave for a long, long time. No
better blade comes out of Sheffield,
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**This good cigarette
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CREAM will nourish
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keeping them soft and
supple, and giving a
fine lasting polish.
Prolong the life of your
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June 6 1945

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is perfection

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'Our Bourbon biscuits will preside at tea!'

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BRITAIN'S CRISPEST BISCUITS BY APPOINTMENT
PEEK FREAN & CO. LTD.



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need a new
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but it's worth
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for a*
Radia
Quality Shirts
Made by McIntyre,
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Made from Natural Herbs
Matured in Genuine Malt
Vinegar
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DUFRAIS & CO. LTD.
21, St. James Sq., London, S.W.1

How they gasped when the great Blondin played a fiddle and beat a drum, poised high up on a tightrope at the Crystal Palace. Thrills of 1861—and how Grandpapa and Grandmama enjoyed them! Quite as much as they enjoyed the certainty of Romary Biscuits for tea after the excitements of the show. To-day, we too, get a thrill of anticipation—when we see in the future, prospects of more abundant supplies of Romary's Tunbridge Wells Water Biscuits—Wheaten Biscuits—Cocktail Biscuits—Ginger Nuts—and Honey Bake.

ROMARY
Tunbridge Wells' Biscuits

to be continued...

The wartime activities of the Y.M.C.A. must go on. In the East, thousands of our men are still fighting. In Europe, the armies of occupation will face many subtle dangers and frustrations.

But that isn't all. Since 1939 a whole generation of boys has grown to young manhood. The Y.M.C.A. must provide for them and for thousands of men returning from the Forces to civil life. Some need homelike quarters. Others need social and educational facilities, friendly guidance about their careers, and help in the use of their leisure.

The extension of the work of the Y.M.C.A. is a constructive contribution to the spiritual forces for the establishment of a permanent peace. Will you help to provide the money to continue its activities at home and abroad?

Donations may be sent to the Lord Mayor of London (Sir Frank Alexander), Acting President of the Y.M.C.A. War and National Service Fund, 112, Great Russell St., London, W.C.1.



Y.M.C.A. War and National Service Fund (Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940)

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at home,
Madam

says OLD HETHERS

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ROBINSON'S
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THE FINEST HAM IN THE WORLD . . .

MARSH'S HAM

• You can't get them now, but they will be produced again by Marsh's from sound well-bred stock reared by British Farmers. Something to which to look forward.



MARSH & BAXTER LTD., BRIERLEY HILL



PUNCH

OR

THE LONDON CHARIARI



Vol. CCVIII No. 5447

June 6 1945

Charivaria

THE Rush Election looks to us like an attempt to get the meetings over before tomatoes have a chance to get really ripe.

The Life and Soul of the Party
 "A prominent figure is Richard Grinsley Sheridan."—*Daily paper*.

Political candidates get extra supplies of petrol, which only goes to show that keen motorists will do anything to get on the road again.

The recent statement by a Ministry of Food dietician that our bread is still far too refined is thought by some to be the forerunner of an attempt to introduce the wholemeal sausage.

The crews of an amphibious unit in the Pacific call themselves The Gondoliers. Preparations are well in hand for a production of *The Mikado*.

Now that the petrol ration has been restored many owners of secondhand cars have gone back to their basic walking.

A reveller smashed several windows one night in the West End recently. He was held on a grave suspicion of celebrating something.

It is predicted that railway dining-cars will be available before the summer. A long experience of our summers tends to make us believe that this will be so.

In a survey of the countryside it is noticed that scarecrows in the fields are gradually getting back into civvies again.



Wax baths are now prescribed at West End beauty salons. The process may have some obscure connection with the umbrella shortage.

It may be some time before this country regains its pre-war position, but with Australia beating us at cricket and France equalizing at football it only needs the usual Davis Cup result to bring us back to normal again.

"On a recent train journey I travelled with two shareholders of the railway company," says a correspondent. In certain political quarters it is thought that it won't be long before all three of them are shareholders.

One Parliamentary candidate says that a certain heckler follows him from meeting to meeting and causes great amusement. They both indignantly deny that they have memorized their scripts.

An agriculturist assures us that a lot of last year's turnip crop couldn't be harvested. Hence the shortage of strawberry jam.

"I don't intend to put my car on the road," declares a Kent correspondent. "My hobby this year will be digging the garden." There's always a chance of striking the petrol pipe-line.

"NAZIS SCATTER FORGED MONTY"
Heading in Gloucester paper.
 What thoroughgoing deception!



Two members of a well-known Hunt became engaged recently. They had been thrown together a lot.

Magazines

MAGAZINES may be defined as what other people insist on reading when they come to dinner in our house and what we do not get a chance of looking at when we go to dinner in other people's houses. In the literary world they come half-way between books and newspapers, being published intermittently compared with the average newspaper and constantly compared with the average book. Unlike books, magazines are not dedicated to anyone, and unlike newspapers they have no Stop Press column; but on the other hand most magazines are like newspapers in having to keep inside the columns, and some are like books in being held together with the sort of glue which crackles if you treat it roughly.

Sometimes magazines are called periodicals; indeed periodicals are really what I am writing about, because only thus can I include the intellectual reviews. A review does not like to count as a magazine because that would line it up with all sorts of frothy work, and the one thing a review is not is frothy. You can tell that by the looks other people give review-readers in trains; looks which betray that the other people are well aware that someone has paid sixpence for their good opinion. The fact that readers of frothy magazines may have paid two shillings simply for a nice read rather strengthens this point. Another thing about intellectual reviews is that they are written for intellectuals, a fact which proprietors of vegetarian guest-houses have not been slow to seize on. It is an interesting truth that the ordinary public has formed its dreadfully obstinate ideas of intellectuals from reading the advertisements in the intellectual reviews, and psychologists think there would be less bad feeling all round, though perhaps not fewer intellectuals, if both sides realized this. Another thing about intellectual reviews is that they are apt to publish modern poetry; but, as modern poetry can only really be defined as the poetry apt to be published in intellectual reviews, I do not see that I can do much good by going on about it now.

Periodicals, as I was saying, are published periodically, which means once a week, or once a month, or even less often. Any magazine which appears less often than once a month risks losing its grip on the general public, which tends in its boneheaded way to confuse the next number with the last after all that time. Thus it is that quarterlies are usually distributed by post, a fact which entirely conditions their character; for anyone getting the same magazine by post every three months is asking to be considered remote from the hurly-burly of life. Quarterlies therefore tend to be artistic or technical or something calling for concentrated reading; with the added justification that the reader who sticks at a tough page has three months to sort it out. And while I am talking about dates of publication I must mention the curious fact that if a weekly is published every Thursday it is apt to have next Saturday's date on it, a fact which psychologists attribute to the modern craze for speed without feeling that they have really got the right explanation.

Having said something about intellectual magazines, I want now to mention the opposite kind. The most striking thing about a magazine which is not trying to be intellectual is of course the way each story or article breaks off and starts up again twenty pages later. It is not uncommon for a long story to break off and start up again half a dozen times in a single magazine, and it is very uncommon for anything to get printed without at least two breaks. All this is possibly because the magazine is

not intellectual and those who write it think those who read it should have something to worry about to balance them up with intellectual readers. But, even so, I do not think that the average editor of this type of magazine quite realizes what the public goes through in tracing the average magazine story or article. Being only human—indeed, more human than most—they get waylaid by other bits of other articles which may lead them back to the beginnings or on to the next bits of these other articles, when yet other bits of yet other articles will waylay them further, so that by the time they have pulled themselves together and arrived at the next bit of the article they started on they will have several loose ends in hand and their heads will be spinning. Of course the idea may be to ensure that everyone shall start and therefore be compelled to finish everything in the magazine, but most readers do feel, however timidly, that if this sort of magazine could possibly find a way of printing the whole of one article before it began another they would by now be so conditioned that they would not know how to find their way about.

Perhaps the most important factor in such magazines is the serial. A serial is a story which the reader may chase right through a magazine without coming to the end of, because the point about a serial is that it *does not end*. It goes on in the next number. On the other hand a serial is always beginning, owing to the considerate way it starts by saying everything it said in the other instalments. Psychologists call this a compensatory action to make up for everything being cut up into bits. Another notable point about serials, and indeed any magazine stories, is that the illustrations are difficult to link to the story, but not impossible if we keep on at it, like everything else in this sort of magazine. I suppose I should say, to be fair, that some articles in this sort of magazine *do* begin and end on the same page, and that the reader's only reaction is a dim sense of being cheated of the rest of the article. Another reaction familiar to such magazine readers is that fierce resolve, when reading how to take an inkstain out of a table-cloth, to remember next time that this is how you take an inkstain out of a table-cloth.

Finally I must mention the specialized magazine which deals with one subject only, for example, some branch of engineering or of animal-keeping, and swings it; never letting up on its subject except for a few jokes and accounts of club outings, and even these are somehow mysteriously coloured by it. It is not known what effect this sort of magazine has on the experts it is written for; but it is very well known that in non-experts it produces an extraordinary glow of conviction that here is the real world and now they belong to it too. Psychologists say that, while not wishing to detract from the skill of the specialized magazine in putting this conviction over, they do feel that it has rather an unbalanced type of mind to work on, because non-experts who buy such magazines from railway bookstalls do so in either very high or very low spirits; that is, either on a lighthearted impulse or because the daily papers are sold out.

• •
"8.0 Claudio Arrau (piano).
'Jardine Sous la Pluie' (Debussy)."

Radio programme in N.Z. paper.

Somebody been watering the wicket again?

There's no doubt things are looking up all round—

Fangasser



The other day—



I actually—



saw a taxi—



standing on a rank—



and—



not—



only—



that—



but—



believe—



it—



or—



not—



I—



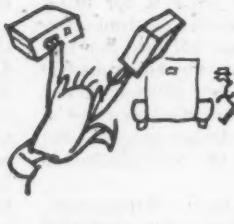
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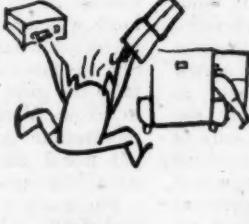
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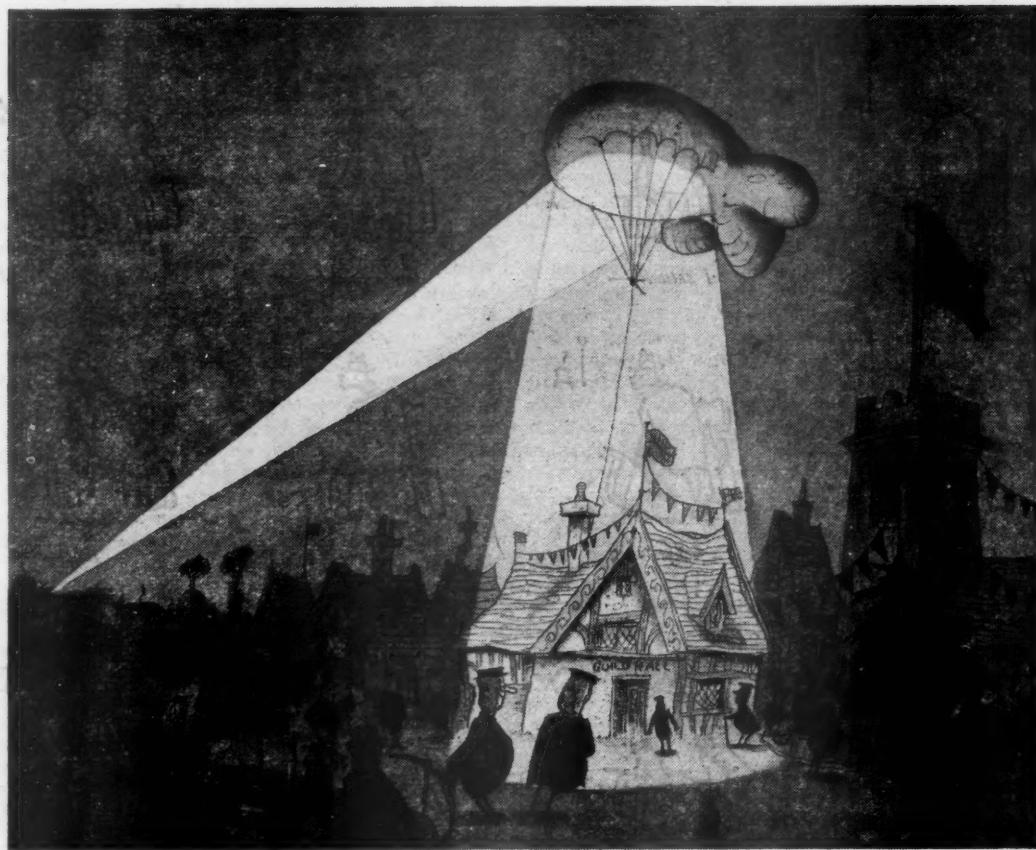
within—



fifteen—



yards of it.



"... and Fen End A.A. site kindly offered to help our celebrations with a little flood-lighting."

The Memoirs of Mipsie

By Blanche Addle of Eigg

XVI—A Third Disillusionment

AFTER the sadness of her second disillusionment (which word I always employ in Mipsie's case in preference to "marriage") and her unlucky experiences in a wholly laudable attempt to earn her daily *brioche*, it is not surprising that my sister longed to start afresh, with "a new country, new friends, new money," as she expressed it. Accordingly she planned to go to America, in spite of the cruel treatment she had received from the U.S.A. through the person of Mr. McWhittle Potts. But forgiveness has ever been an inherent part of her sweet character, and she was greatly attracted by the stories her young

débutantes had told her of that land of plenty of millionaires—stories which made her think that she might at last find a Utopia where there was not the endless stress and struggle for filthy lucre which lays waste our time elsewhere; it would just fall into her lap. She was fascinated too by the romantic tales the girls told her of their homes in New York and Baltimore—the picturesque gold dinner-services, the old-world charm of rose diamonds round the porch.

She was just on the eve of departure, and Addle, who thoroughly approved this new step and had indeed even bought her ticket for her, was about

to escort her to Liverpool "so as to be sure she didn't get on the wrong ship and have to come back again," as he jokingly put it, when Fate once more intervened.

At a *soirée* at the Russian Embassy she was presented to Prince Fedor Ubetzkoi, already an old and sick man. These two qualities were quite enough to appeal to my sister's innate womanliness, and when she learnt that he was the ruler of Goulashia, with that beautiful little country solidly behind him—solid with platinum mines, that he was seventy-six and a widower, with a weak heart, her own heart contracted with pain at the thought of

the journey she had so nearly taken. "Do the work that's nearest," was a favourite motto of my beloved mother's, and Mipsie must have recollected it at this moment, for within a week she had cancelled all her plans and as Princess Fedor Ubetzkoi was journeying back with her husband to Ekaterinbog, the capital of Goulashia.

Here the first of her disappointments awaited her.

Fedor can hardly be blamed perhaps for his age, for that very senility which appealed to Mipsie so greatly, but he would have been well advised to have had some young attaché or A.D.C. always at hand to tell strangers what had apparently passed completely from his mind, that he had by his first marriage a daughter of forty, Irina, who ruled like a queen in Ekaterinbog, and a twenty-five-year-old son Michel, who would of course inherit Goulashia and every grain of platinum in the country.

However, Mipsie was never one to cry over spilt milk, and she soon accepted the situation philosophically and looked around for where her next task lay. Immediately she saw her duty clear. Prince Fedor was obviously not long for this world; but Prince Michel was young—the future of Goulashia and everything in it was in his hands. My sister determined that she would join hands with him in this sacred trust.

She was abundantly rewarded. Michel became completely devoted to his stepmother, and for two happy years they were scarcely ever—indeed the maliciously-minded said never—apart. But Mipsie cared not a fig for gossip and she and "Mich" just laughed at court disapproval and Irina's frowns. (For some unaccountable reason the Princess seemed against my sister from the first.) They rode, danced and fished in the lake together. They indulged in revolver practice on the palace chickens, a special breed in which Princess Irina took great pride. She begged her father to intervene and he actually put his foot down and insisted that they practice on serfs instead. (Prince Fedor was a great admirer of England, and when he heard that pheasant-shooting was a pastime of the landed gentry he determined to adopt it in his own country. Unfortunately, not being a good linguist, he interpreted the phrase as "peasant shooting," and acted accordingly.) Above all, they took part in a private theatricals.

All my family have inherited histrionic ability to a marked degree. My brother Crainy is known as Crambo to

this day, so effective was he in dumb parts, while Mipsie was always inimitable as the black sheep when we sang the famous nursery-rhyme to visitors. It happened that acting had also been a great tradition at Ekaterinbog Palace, where there was a beautiful little theatre, decorated in sky-blue plush and platinum, each fauteuil being fitted with a crystal carafe of vodka and a small revolver, in case a revolution should break out unexpectedly in the middle of a performance. So far, the court had only given the French classics, but Mipsie changed all that as she changed many things in Goulashia. She introduced light opera, musical comedy, and even pantomime, playing the principal boy's rôle herself. To the amazed and scandalized palace set she tried to explain that it was "an old English custom," but they were, I fear, too rigid and prejudiced to appreciate this facet of British culture. She received, however, the wholehearted support of the Army, and especially of Prince Fedor's bodyguard, who made Mipsie the toast of every regimental dinner, drinking her health in their own top-boot and then

throwing the boot on the fire, as was the Goulashian custom. The officer who could hop home after the festivities without toppling over was then supposed to win the lady. One day thirty officers hopped home successfully! Poor Mipsie, she never told me how she got out of that quandary as State affairs kept her too busy to write for several weeks.

Meanwhile, like a snake in the grass, the storm clouds were brewing in Ekaterinbog which were shortly to undermine the silver lining of my sister's happiness.

M. D.

W.R.N.S.—in Praise

THIS is in praise of the Wrens—
Boat Wrens, Coder Wrens,
Steward Wrens,
Quarters Wrens, General Duties Wrens,
Wrens on shore and afloat;
Wren ratings in sailoressque caps,
Spry, but not musical comedy;
Chief Petty Officer Wrens
With the sober three buttons on their
sleeves
And, as much as the old school of
chiefs,
The backbone of their Service;
Wren officers in their berets
With the flaring proud badge of the sea,
Wrens in white shirts or blue blouses,
Skirts or bell-bottoms;
At drill on the square in the forenoon,
Eagerly dancing at night.
Coming off watch in the morning
Pale, with drained faces;
Wrens with purple carbon-papered
fingers
Rolling off signals—"Top Secret.
Important";
Wrens in the Dockyard
Saluting like rather shy children;
Wrens on an M.T.B.'s deck
With greasy small wrists and a
spanner;
Plotting Wrens, Messengers, Sparkers,
Torpedo Wrens, Ordnance Wrens;
Cooks—
Trim, bright, staunch, overworked.
Good hands and good shipmates
And, let it be gladly proclaimed,
Utterly indispensable.
This is in praise of the Wrens.



"Just put Auntie's pen behind my
ear, dear—it will save me a special
journey."

Impending Apology

"The author's experience include taxation evasion, petty cash frauds, bankruptcy offences, forgery, fictitious sales and manipulation of the wages book."

"The Accountant."

At the Pictures

REFERRED BACK

HOLLYWOOD farce is getting as parochial as B.B.C. variety (where to appreciate the jokes in one programme you have to be a regular listener to all the others). All the most effective cracks in *The Princess and the Pirate* (Director: DAVID BUTLER) depend on your recalling previous comedies in which BOB HOPE has shared the story with BING CROSBY; for the rest, this piece is a laboriously-contrived, lavishly-mounted Technicolor collection of old devices for Mr. HOPE alone. Its framework is a kind of burlesque of the "pirate" scenes of *Frenchman's Creek*, but even there most of the laughs are got in the easy way—by setting the stage for highfalutin sword-and-cloak stuff and then dropping in a little present-day slang. It wouldn't be worth complaining about the second-rateness of this kind of thing except that BOB HOPE is a first-rate comedian who could be admirably, satisfactorily comic if they gave him good stuff to work with, or even a good partner (such as he had in Mr. CROSBY) with whom to build up a few really solid, balanced funny scenes. Hero he has only a beautiful girl (VIRGINIA MAYO)—who is put up at one point to sing a song that could be no more irrelevant if it were sung by someone in the audience—and an eighteenth-century background that makes some of his twentieth-century remarks sound funny. Apart from the snap ending, which is laughable but depends on your knowledge of the HOPE-CROSBY partnership, the device I found most amusing comes in the first minute: in the corner of a "period" introductory subtitle about the fearful and terrifying reputation of a pirate chief named "The Hook" suddenly appears the face of Mr. HOPE, who says ingratiatingly "That's not me,

folks, I come on later—I play a coward." I should add that nine-tenths of the audience screams with delight for practically every minute of the film.

Not precisely right in detail, but



[*The Princess and the Pirate*]

WATER SPRITES

La Roche WALTER SLEZAK
Sylvester the Great BOB HOPE

remarkably topical all the same, *The Master Race* (Director: HERBERT J. BIBERMAN) shows the Germans aware that they have lost the war and setting out to try to win the peace. The scene is a ruined Belgian town, occupied by the Allies, whose efforts to get life moving again are hampered by



[*The Master Race*]

A MASTER FACE

Von Beck GEORGE COULOURIS

the machinations of an underground Nazi, a disguised member of the German general staff (GEORGE COULOURIS). He is represented as a boss of spies, and we see him giving many their orders, at the moment of Germany's collapse, to behave in a similarly dis-

ruptive way in other parts of Allied-occupied territory: sow dissension and stay alive, those are their instructions. In this particular town he almost succeeds, and the lesson of the film, to show the dangerous ease with which one unscrupulous saboteur can break up and hinder good intentions in a shattered community, comes over very powerfully. On the other side is the American major who is the head of A.M.G. in the town, and between these two opposing principals are arranged various representatives, not too obviously representative, of other forces at work in such conditions: the misguided patriot, the guerrillas returned from the hills, the people who collaborated (for various reasons) with the Germans, the released prisoners, and the rest.

This is a serious, worthy picture that is also interesting and sometimes exciting. Very seldom indeed can those four adjectives be applied to the same film.

There is quite a bright French (1940) trifle called *Battement de Cœur* (Director: HENRY DECOIN), with DANIELLE DARRIEUX, which begins excellently in a school for pickpockets under the flamboyant SATURNIN FABRE, but tails off rather into sentimentality. Few of you, I suppose, will get a chance to see this, so I will balance the score with a good word for *A Medal for Benny* (Director: IRVING PICHEL). This is a story of poor Mexicans in California, surprisingly quick and full of amusing dialogue and otherwise remarkable for a very fine performance by that excellent player J. CARROLL NAISH as the dignified old father of the bad boy of the town who unexpectedly became a hero.

R. M.

The Visitor

"I HAVE a little job for you," said our Chief over the telephone to Captain Sympson. "The Government of Kugombaland has heard with alarm that you are in charge of the welfare of their Kugombas in the Middle East, and they have sent one of their leading citizens to Cairo to see what is really happening. You will meet him at Graziers' Hotel on Tuesday and put yourself at his disposal."

So Sympson and I rushed to Cairo and met the Visitor in the bar, where we tried to create a good impression by saying that we never drank at midday, only to have the chagrin of watching the Visitor sink four double gins while we toyed with lemonade. He was one of those hearty Colonial types who look as though they could fell an elephant with a fly-swat.

"I'm making a quick tour of the Middle East," he said, "and I want to see as many Kugombas as possible in five days. I have my own car for myself and my secretary, another car with a cameraman and Public Relations reporter, and your car can follow behind. I suggest we make an early start. Say 0500 hours."

The effort of waking up our Driver Obongo at 0400 hours so shattered Sympson that he had to go back to bed again himself to recover, and then Obongo and I had a terrific job to bring him back to consciousness. However, we arrived in good time at the hotel and found the Visitor waiting on the steps.

"Evidently they don't have speed limits in Kugombaland," said Sympson after we had been travelling for five minutes, during which Obongo's eyes had nearly popped out of his head in his efforts to keep our ancient truck within sight of the leaders. He just missed the large statue of the man with the pointing finger at the junction of Kasr-el-Nil and Sharia Mohamed Ali by a fraction of an inch, which Sympson said was a good thing, because it was too nice a statue to spoil.

Out on the open road we went faster than ever, and we were not surprised when volumes of smoke began to pour out of the bonnet of our truck. Obongo got out, sat by the road, and fanned himself.

"The truck," he said, "is dead." Sympson took a hasty glance at the

The fact that goods made of raw materials in short supply owing to war conditions are advertised in this paper should not be taken as an indication that they are necessarily available for export.



"Well, don't call me that again—see, PRIVE!"

engine and nodded, and we thought we were stranded, but the other cars had seen what had happened, and came back for us.

"Get in with the photographer," said the Visitor.

So we got in with the photographer and the Public Relations man. It was quite a comfortable car, and Sympson sat back and lighted a cigar and we prepared to enjoy ourselves, but unfortunately the car would not start. It is a curious fact, not easy to explain logically, that Sympson's capacity for upsetting human beings seems sometimes to extend also to mechanical vehicles.

The Visitor began to get impatient.

"We can't waste all day," he said. "I suggest that Captain Sympson comes in my car with my secretary and myself, and the others follow when and if their car starts."

Naturally I was left behind, but I heard Sympson's further adventures two days later. It appears that he told the Visitor with a gay laugh that he (Sympson) was a Jonah so far as cars were concerned, and then related a couple of quite funny anecdotes about occasions when he had been in cars that had broken down, one of which amused the Visitor's driver so much that he

shook with laughter, lost control, and ran into a tree. Nobody was hurt, but the car was obviously what Obongo would have called "dead," so the Visitor and Sympson left the secretary and the driver in charge of the car, and trudged four miles to El Hookah railway station.

"There's a train for Port Loofah in an hour," said Sympson, "and there are three Kugomba Companies at Port Loofah, so we won't have wasted much time."

Hot and weary they arrived at El Hookah and scrambled into the train as it moved out.

"I hope your evil influence does not extend itself to railway trains," said the Visitor anxiously. "You don't think the engine will jump the rails?"

"No," said Sympson, with a reassuring laugh, "we shall get to Port Loofah all right."

"Not in this train, you won't," said an R.A.F. officer who sat opposite to them. "This train is going in the opposite direction. First stop, Cairo."

○ ○

"TWO BEANS WORTH GROWING"
Heading of gardening article.

Why not make it five?



"To the masked ball at the Assembly Rooms."

Bedroom Scene

ONE day when my Age and Service Release Group comes into its own, and I have regained possession of my house and what is left of my furniture has been recovered from the three corners of the world and I enter at once upon a life of freedom, reduced meat rations and fifty-six days' leave with full pay and allowances—when all this happens one of the things I shall find most strange will be the absence of an inventory in every room I enter. Sitting here in what I call my bedroom, but what the inventory describes, I note, as Room 23, I am in no doubt whatever about what the room contains, or to be strictly accurate what it would contain but for the intrusion of my own uncategorized belongings. It contains, for instance:

RUGS, BEDSIDE.

Real soldiers, I am afraid, might laugh a little bitterly at the idea of Rugs, Bedside, being provided by the Government on the scale of one per officer. There is a deficiency, very likely, of Rugs, Bedside, in Burma. Well, they can have mine. You could catch fish in it, I dare say, except that anything under a pound and a half would slip through the mesh, or you could push it under the wheels of a jeep to help you over a patch of deep mud; indeed, it seems probable from the look of it that something of the sort has already been tried. But considered simply as a bedside rug it fails in its mission. The bare feet do not sink into the deep pile, nor can the toes be said with exactitude to wriggle luxuriously in its velvety texture. What happens seven times out of ten is that the big toe catches in one of the loose strands or loops of string and is wrenched backwards with excruciating agony; and on the remaining three occasions the little toe, which is widely known to be even more sensitive to injury, is doubled under by the same process and turns a dull angry purple. The Romans used to call this colour *lividus*, though with less reason.

The really surprising thing about my bedside rug is that on the current price of secondhand carpets in this country its value is about £10.

TUBS, W. PAPER.

I have absolutely no criticism to make of my Tub, W. Paper. It is a straight, up-and-down little piece, not comely, but serviceable, and about the right height for

tying a shoe-lace on. It is of metal, so that a fire in it is of little consequence, and it is big enough to hold Manuals and Provisional Handbooks with ease. It would even do for coal, if there was any. But what I chiefly admire about it is that its top is as big as its bottom, so that it stands firm whatever you throw into it, unlike those wretched wickerwork civilian affairs, which taper towards the ground and are as often on their sides as in the upright or vertical position. I think I may take this tub back to civil life with me. After all, the Government it belonged to when I took it over doesn't exist now.

CHAIRS, EASY. 1

I am loath to include this item, because it tends to accentuate that atmosphere of soft living which the appearance of the Rug, Bedside, has already fatally underlined. The picture of a slothful officer lounging in an easy-chair in his bedroom with his feet buried to the ankle bones in a bedside rug, with nothing to do but wonder whether his Release Group or his Defence Medal will overtake him first, is not one that I am disposed to draw. But "Chairs, Easy, 1" appear on the inventory and the inference is that what is thus described is the apparatus on which I am now sitting. I don't deny for a moment that the description is correct. I should say that from the maker's point of view it is about the easiest chair ever nailed together. It is only that one should not think of anyone sitting in a chair of this kind as absolutely "lounging." There are various attitudes the sitter can adopt in this chair. He can lean right back in it until his head touches the floor, thus breaking open his skull, or he can sit well forward if he prefers to take the blow on the chin. Or he can sit, as I am sitting now, upright and unafraid. But he can't lounge. The reason for this is that the chair has all its four legs drawn close together under itself, as if it didn't care to risk sullying them by contact with the outside world. You can't blame it either. Anybody who shares a room with my bedside rug soon learns to take up that particular attitude.

TABLE, WOODEN CHAIR, WOODEN MIRROR

These articles conclude the inventory. The Table, Wooden, is just a wooden table, as its name implies. Not so the Chair, Wooden, since there is no such item in my bedroom. I have looked for it, and it just isn't there. Probably the inventory is wrong, which is rather a serious matter and ought to be pointed out to the Camp Commandant. The whole idea of the inventory is that it should state what is in the room, not what isn't; otherwise it might go on to an interminable length. The Mirror is not very good. It is inaccurate. My face looks a good deal older than I remember it, and by some trick of the glass the features are made to appear out of proportion and even wrongly positioned. I shall speak to the Camp Commandant about this, when I have time.

Soft-hearted people may be beginning to ask themselves whether I have a bed. The answer is, yes, but it is my own; and nothing of my own appears, if I can help it, on the inventory. It is, I suppose, take it for all in all, about the worst piece of furniture in the room. H. F. E.

Commercial Candour

"WE DISPENSE WITH ACCURACY"

Notice in a chemist's window in Tottenham.

Mr. Smith Gets the Car Going.

WHERE-ON, the Cistern fill'd
Replete with vitreous Oyle, the wealthy Fount
Of *Baku* and *Ploesti*, spouting Gold,
Iran and *Iraq* and the *Ural* Mounts,
And Western *Kansas*, hee by subtil Art
And slow Perswasion, from the metal'd Plates
Immix'd with Acid and by cleansing Fyr
The chrystall Stream distill'd, undaunted urg'd
Their secret Pow'r compact. With ample Force
The tortur'd Shaft his skilfull Hand revolves,
And sweet yet painful Toyle, till blazing Noon,
A Summers hour. At length, by Pumpe updriv'n
And hidden Duct convey'd, th' explosive Oyle,
Disintegrate, expects the vital Sparke,
Not long defer'd. As when, with Thunder charg'd
Two pregnant Clouds o'erhang the dark'ning Skie,
And in a flash *Jove's* angry Lightning splits
Th' expectant Ayr; the loud Artillery
Of Heav'n is loos'd, and all the sounds of Earth
Are husht to Silence; soe from point to point
Of ev'ry petty Engyn fiercely leapt
The energizing Fyr, nor flash'd in vain,
But with a low and muted Thunder thrust
The circl'd Pistons in their iren Walls
Imprison'd, apt to turn the flying Wheel. . . .

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Your Vote and How to Use It

THE last election was held in November 1935. Polling day for the next election is July 5th, 1945. There, in two simple sentences, you have the justification for this article. There are thousands of people like you, dear elector, who are wondering how they can best fit in with the tremendous drama shortly to be unfolded. For a few weeks after VE Day these people held their heads high. They were almost carefree. Overnight, as it were, the tiredness left their eyes. It was as though the whole country had been treated with a gigantic mud-pack. Only the weather was unkind.

Now, all is changed. Smooth brows are puckered again and lines of care, anxiety, ceaseless vigil, malnutrition and inflexible resolve have reasserted themselves. Faces are pallid—as though the very life-blood had been drained from the pockets.

All this is most marked in London. In buses, trams and trains, hollow-eyed travellers scan their papers for some guide to the political complex. They stare grimly at the printed date and their minds go back to another July 5th, some other July 5th, when . . . oh, well, you know the kind of thing I mean. The day of their judgment approaches and they are singularly unprepared.

This is where I come in.

First of all, elector, you must get right out of your head the silly notion that your vote doesn't matter. That way lies complacency, appeasement, *laissez-faire* and ultimate self-reproach. In your daily round you meet scores of people much less well-informed and less responsible than yourself. Have you thought of your duty to these people? Many of them, especially those in their early twenties,

will be frightfully biased in their political convictions. Yet these people have a vote. Is it not your bounden duty, therefore, to neutralize some of the evil done by these people by recording your vote for the other side? Prolonged thought on these lines will convince you, I feel sure, that a vote is not a thing to be ignored.

Of course, if you have the interests of your party at heart you can do more than this. You can do as I did in 1935 when I got my candidate, the Label man, home by a majority of 307 over his Preservative opponent. On the eve of the poll I rang up all my friends in the constituency and made separate agreements with all who declared their intention to vote Preservative. Each verbal agreement was to the effect that since our respective votes would cancel out we might as well save paper, petrol, shoe-leather and time by not voting at all.

In the end I was 127 votes to the good and my electoral expenses (telephone) were £1 3s. 6d. I should imagine that a devoted band of workers, forty or fifty strong, operating this scheme of mine could ensure victory for any candidate. It is all a matter of organization.

In a three-cornered fight, the work is a little more complicated. You have to arrange your truces with the supporters of both opposition candidates and telephone expenses are correspondingly high.

It may be that I have inadvertently assisted my party's fortunes already. In a speech made recently to celebrate the re-formation of the town cricket club, I veered from my subject sufficiently to say a few words about voting procedure. After testing the political tendencies of those present and finding them shockingly misguided I dealt at some length with the business of vote by ballot.

The meeting had broken up before I realized I had led my audience astray to some extent. By an unfortunate slip of the tongue I hinted that a cross placed against a candidate's name registered a voter's disapproval. This absurd mistake—it is now much too late to do anything about it—may not be without some influence on the election result. If so, I shall never cease to marvel at the astonishing buoyancy of British democracy.

Remember, then, dear elector—your vote *does* matter. Familiarize yourself with the slogans of the chief parties and try to forget them as soon after the election as possible. At the moment the policies of the two main camps seem to be converging and it will be interesting to see what happens after the intersection.

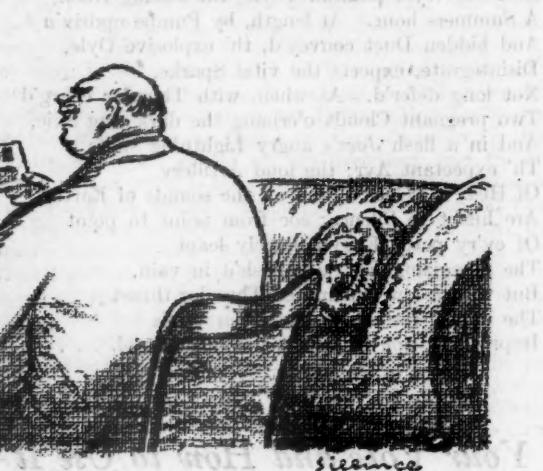
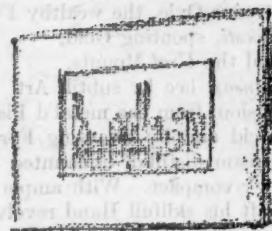
Does that help at all?

HOD.





Mr. Zimpy Gets the Cue Game



since

"Fancy stamping joybells on a solicitor's letter!"

The Little Less

REGARDLESS of the sweeping whirlwind's sway,
Careless their merits or their faults to scan,
They kept the noiseless tenor of their way
Through caverns measureless to man
Where harmless fish monastic silence keep,
Mingled with ceaseless bleatings of his sheep,
Their lids shut longest in a dreamless sleep.

The spouseless Adriatic mourns her lord—
Among the faithless faithful only he—
About his chariot numberless are poured
The moanings of the homeless sea,
As though a tongueless nightingale should swell
To bottomless perdition, there to dwell
Upon the sight of lidless eyes in hell.

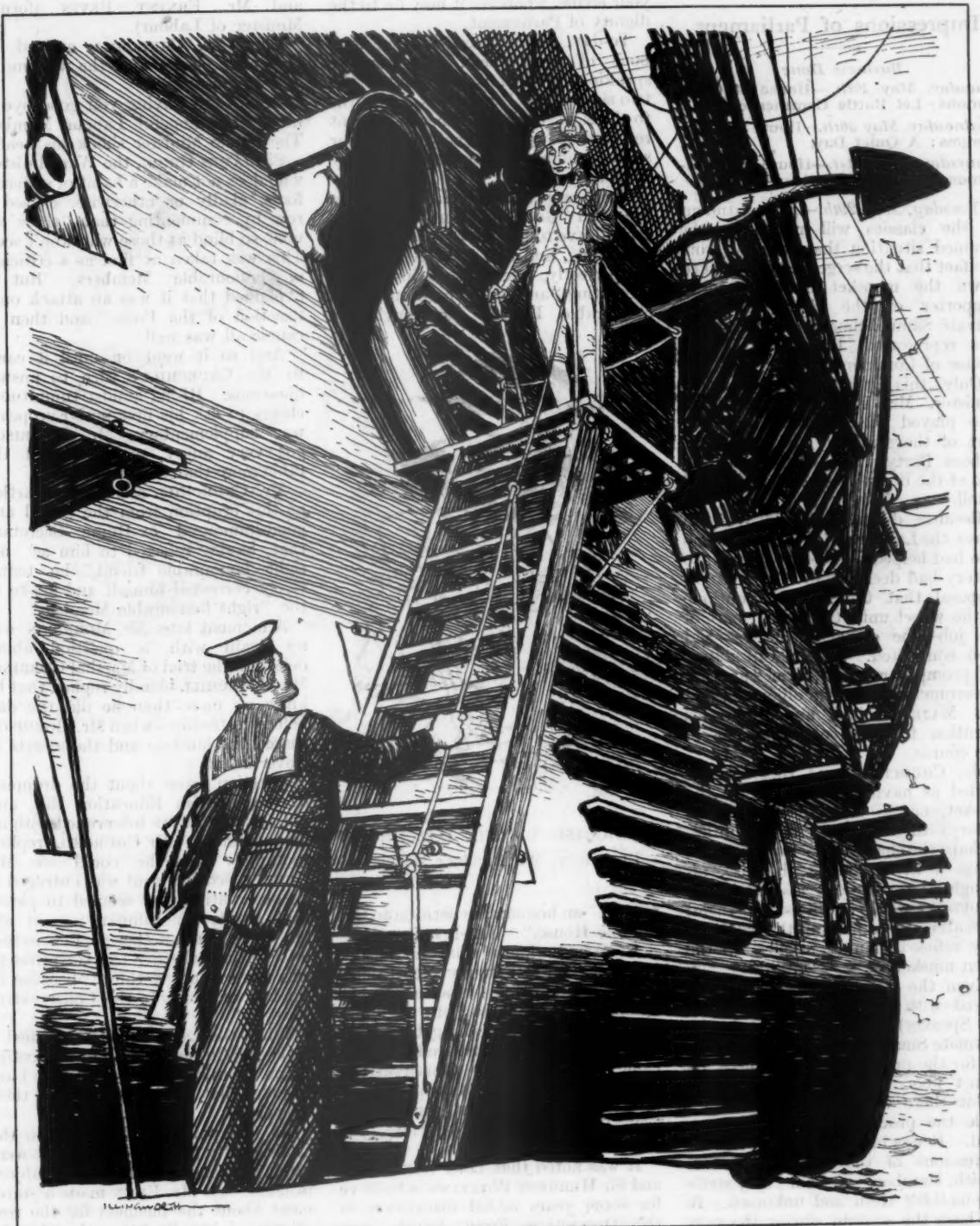
The swain, mistrustless of his smutted face,
Led on, yet sinless, with desire to know;
Restless, unfixed in principle and place,
All bloodless lay the untrodden snow.
By matchless deeds express thy matchless sire—
A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire—
As supperless to bed they must retire.

Joyous we two launch out on trackless seas;
Breathless we flung us on the windy hill.
I did receive fair speechless messages.
I listened, motionless and still.
This Partridge oft shall see in cloudless skies,
Where the poor houseless, shivering female lies
Sleepless with cold commemorative eyes.

For mode of faith let graceless zealots fight,
Or idly froth amid the boundless main
For precious friends hid in death's dateless night—
Some painless sympathy with pain.
Come, let us make love deathless, thou and I!
And moan forth witless words with many a sigh
For barren desert, fountainless and dry.

A stream went voiceless by, still deadened more
As breezeless lake on which the slim canoe
Still bears the name the hapless virgin bore,
Which else were fruitless of their due.
But on the viewless wings of Poesy—
Seeing all their luckless race are dead save me—
Awake, arise my love and fearless be!

J. B. N.



"WESTERN OPERATION COMPLETED"

With the nation's gratitude to the Royal Navy.

Impressions of Parliament

Business Done:

Tuesday, May 29th.—House of Commons: Let Battle Commence.
Wednesday, May 30th.—House of Commons: A Quiet Day.
Thursday, May 31st.—House of Commons: Votes for Holiday-makers.

Tuesday, May 29th.—Every student of the classics will remember the strained situation that resulted from the fact that the sergeant had knocked down the musket of that sturdy supporter of the rights of man, Private Samuel Small. The situation was reproduced, large-scale, in the House of Commons to-day.

Only, this time, it was the Prime Minister, Mr. WINSTON CHURCHILL, who played the somewhat disputed part of the sergeant, and the entire Labour Party which appeared in the rôle of the dogged and defiant Samuel Small.

Because, during the brief Whitsun recess, the Labour and Liberal Ministers who had helped to steer us through to victory had declined Mr. CHURCHILL's proposal that they should continue at the wheel until the second part of the job—the defeat of Japan—had been completed. So Mr. CHURCHILL had promptly resigned, formed another Government minus the objectors, and HIS MAJESTY had announced his intention to dissolve Parliament in due course.

Mr. CHURCHILL was therefore regarded as having knocked down the musket, or (to move back a bit in history) thrown down the gauntlet. Perhaps the change of metaphor makes things a little difficult, because, although the resignees (as Sir JOHN ANDERSON would doubtless call them) were all eager to pick up the gauntlet, they refused blankly to pick up the fallen musket.

Even the "Dook" himself (a part played with great tact and skill by Mr. Speaker) could not persuade the obstinate Small to recover the weapon. So, for the present, it stays where 'tis—on t' floor.

But there were some lively times while the process of persuasion was tried. It was interesting to watch the expressions of the many new, and newish, Members to whom Party strife is something fresh and unknown. It has been the custom during the past four years and more to "pull punches" when dealing with a political opponent. That rule is clearly abolished. From now on it is to be all-in, with no holds barred. Which is all very exciting for

your scribe, whatever it may do to the dignity of Parliament.

To-day, for instance, was one long bout of good clean fun—roughly speaking. Which is to say that the two sides of the House took it in turns to think so, while the other side went red and glowered. People like your scribe, who are onlookers, could enjoy it all the time.

There was a crowded House from the word "Go!" Mr. FRANK BOWLES asked leave to present a petition about something, and had got the "patter" off perfectly, except that instead of presenting "an humble petition to this honourable House," he sought to



DIGGING UP THE HATCHET
 RED CHIEF, MR. HERBERT MORRISON

present "an honourable petition to this humble House." Which it is not.

Everybody knew what he meant, however, and the House settled down to the Question Hour. Captain PETER THORNEYCROFT, first of the new Ministers to be in action, got a hearty cheer—but it was noticed that it came only from the Conservatives. This was no reflection on the popularity of THORNEYCROFT, but was a sure indication that Party warfare had begun.

It was noted that Lord WINTERTON and Sir HERBERT WILLIAMS, who have for some years added distinction to the Opposition Front Bench, had moved over to the Government side, their places being taken by Mr. CLEMENT ATTLEE (former Lord President of the Council), Mr. HERBERT MORRISON (former Home Secretary),

and Mr. ERNEST BEVIN (former Minister of Labour).

Then Mr. CHURCHILL arrived, to deafening cheers and the waving of Order-papers.

"Are they waving you good-bye?" inquired a hopeful Labour Member. The Prime Minister shook his head.

Sir JAMES GRIGG, the War Minister, who does not make a habit of suffering fools, gladly or otherwise, caused a row by commenting that "there are none so blind as those who won't see." This was taken at first as a criticism of honourable Members. But he explained that it was an attack on a "section of the Press," and then of course all was well.

And so it went on until it came to Mr. CHURCHILL's turn to answer questions. Rising amidst tumultuous cheers to ask his first post-European-war supplementary, Mr. MORRISON got very angry, and thumped the table more than somewhat.

Mr. CHURCHILL seemed so startled at this eruption from the genial and good-humoured ex-Home Secretary that, having referred to him as "my right honourable friend," he tentatively corrected himself and spoke of the "right honourable Member."

A moment later Mr. MORRISON was up again with a question about delays in the trial of Marshal GOERING. Mr. CHURCHILL blandly replied that he knew no more than he did the day before yesterday—when Mr. MORRISON shared the burdens and the secrets of Government.

Question arose about the dropping of the Scottish Education Bill, and Mr. ERNEST BEVIN intervened with an acid comment. Mr. CHURCHILL replied soothingly that he could see Mr. BEVIN's Scottish soul was outraged—an observation that seemed to please that sturdy Englishman not at all. Mr. BEVIN had another go, demanding information whether the Government was not so poor a thing "because of the lack of ability in the Conservative Party?"

When the Labour mirth had died a little, Mr. CHURCHILL rejoined sweetly: "You are in as good a position as I am to judge that, having so long had their support!"

At this point "The Dook" in the Chair gently pointed out that we were getting a long way from the subject in hand. So Mr. EDEN made a statement about the business for the rest of this dying Parliament's life. In doing so he upset a whole stack of muskets. Mr. MORRISON was up again with a complaint that a Bill of his, "vitally necessary," was to be scrapped. "Can this Government," he asked,



"Excuse me, I'm from the Roman Institute of Public Opinion—which part of the Government policy do you prefer, panem or circenses?"

"not make up its mind about *anything*?" This question got the biggest cheer of the afternoon, exceeded only by that which almost drowned his next comment, that the Government was "so hopelessly divided."

Mr. Speaker was of opinion that that sounded like an election speech, and Mr. EDEN banteringly pleaded with Mr. MORRISON not to generate so much heat, adding that all could not speak at once. When the veracity of this last remark was instantly shown to be non-existent, Mr. EDEN merely smiled, and waited for the hubbub to die down.

Soon afterwards, Mr. CHURCHILL had another brush with Mr. MORRISON, who made some comment which (as the old-time newspapers used to say) was "imperfectly heard." The Prime Minister fixed his former colleague with a steely eye and remarked: "I don't propose to bandy incivilities with you! You seem to have come out of your tenure of the Home Office with worsened manners!"

As though wearying a little of the

more or less passive rôle of cheerers, the Conservative Members here intervened with some questions of their own, addressed to the Labour Ministers: "Who quit?" "Who walked out?" "Who didn't finish the job?"

There was no reply, but Mr. CHURCHILL commented that he "rather enjoyed these occasions."

After so gargantuan a helping of *hors d'œuvre* it was not perhaps surprising that the meal itself fell flat. It consisted of a debate on coal prices, which went on for a long time, but seemed to have no other particular importance.

Wednesday, May 30th.—Apart from a little noise in the early stages, the tumult and the shouting had died to-day, and, incidentally, a considerable number of the captains seemed to have departed. The Front Opposition Bench had a half-populated air, and Mr. ATTLEE seemed a trifle lonely as he sat without the solid phalanx of fellow ex-Ministers who had been there yesterday.

However, everything went along

quietly, and Mr. CHURCHILL promised that, if necessary, there would be a special Bill to enable people who celebrated "Wakes Weeks" and other mass-holidays to vote in the General Election later than the date fixed for the rest of the nation, July 5th. This seemed to give a lot of quiet pleasure to honourable Members from the areas concerned.

Thursday, May 31st.—The plan was announced: the holiday-makers will cast their votes on July 12th. General applause.

Something—a great deal—of the old pre-break-up atmosphere returned for a moment when Mr. EDEN announced that the British Government had felt compelled to intervene in the trouble between the French and the Syrians. This, said Mr. EDEN, was vital to our communications with the East.

Mr. ATTLEE, with all his old Ministerial calm and precision, associated his Party with the Government's action. Everybody felt it a pity that it takes a war or a near-war to produce such happy results.



"I'm like you—now we 'AVE got peace I can't realize it!"

It Can Now Be Revealed . . .

A Ramble Round Westminster Pier

IT can now be disclosed to the public that really matters that the other day a German U-boat was made fast to Westminster Pier, London. It was a great sight: and it was a fine piece of imaginative administration to send her there. German warships surrendering at Scapa Flow are one thing, but German warships passing under the new Waterloo Bridge are another. When the Germans settle down to proving that they were never really defeated at sea such pictures may be useful.

But will they? A soldier-friend was telling us the other day of the interrogation of a captured German officer on the morning of the crossing of the Rhine. The captive was arrogant and confident still: the Allies were nothing and the Fuehrer would still show them what was what. All the time in continuous orderly streams the "air-

borne" invading fleet was roaring overhead—transports, gliders, fighters, everything—a terrific spectacle! At last, a British officer annoyed with Colonel Arrogant said "All right. Step outside. What do you think of that?" And the German, after one glance at the stupendous unprecedented show in the skies, said, "That? That is just propaganda." So one never knows.

But we, at least, hurried to see U 776 the day she arrived: not wholly pleased, we confess, for she was lying in *our* berth—the berth where we lay, so many cold nights in the "phoney" war at the beginning and so many hot nights in the V-war at the end—not to mention a good many odd, uncomfortable, and noisy nights at other periods. The crowd was too great the other day for us to see: but we hope that Mr. Best, the veteran pier-master,

was there to "take a line" when the U-boat came. That must have been a thrill for Mr. Best, or one of his colleagues, who have served at that pier throughout the war, helped to secure so many craft, and had such an alarmingly good view of enemy proceedings. They never thought, we bet, to see a German ship-of-war manoeuvring below the bridge and asking leave to come alongside. We bet they laughed—but took it as a matter of course.

Indeed, we bet they never thought—five, four, three, two—even one year ago, that their fine pier would see the war out. On the record of London River piers the chances were rather against it: and local conditions, the proximity of Parliament, Whitehall, Scotland Yard, and one or two things like that—seemed to be all against it. Pardon our harping upon this small

corner of the Empire—a mere pier, not even a pier, a floating pontoon; it is not in Burma, or Germany, or North Holland, or Chyukyukyu. But it is, in a sense, the marine heart of the Empire, since Westminster is the heart of the Empire and the pier is its port. Anyhow, that is where they sent the German U-boat; so we thought you might be interested in a few shy details . . . Quite.

Well, it was from that pier, we remember, that we self-consciously reported to the Port of London Authority that both Charing Cross and Waterloo Bridges were on fire. It seemed an absurd action, but as a matter of fact the Authority didn't know, and fortunately the Fire Service had noticed it too. Then there was the "land-mine" phase, when poor Mr. Best, having observed, as he thought, an enemy parachutist descending on the river, was entering his hut to report the fact with proper dignity when a parachute-mine on County Hall, opposite, blew him through his hut and half-way through the Victoria Embankment.

At that time, and most other times, we should have asked rather a high premium for the insurance of Westminster Pier. On the night of September 7, 1940, we saw Limehouse Pier badly hit and three (repeat three) piers destroyed in the reach below. North Woolwich Pier was hit as well. On May 10, 1941, Tower Pier was destroyed. On that night, also, not only was the House of Commons Chamber destroyed, but—it can now be disclosed—a bomb fell through the roof of the House of Lords Chamber (a pretty good right and left) but did not explode. There was a bomb in Whitehall and incendiaries on the bridge and the pier itself. Even before the Doodle-bug Age the odds against Westminster Pier were going up and up. Then one of Those Things fell on Charing Cross Bridge and two more in the river under the Embankment, not to mention the swimmers which rushed at the Pier and altered course to St. James's Park, or poor old Lambeth, or the Borough, or St. Thomas's Hospital. If you look at a Bomb and V chart you will see W.P. as the centre of a most unwholesome centre of activity. You see too much from there, and we suffered the pangs of all South London.

We mention all these gruesome details "with evident relish," it is true, but not without a serious purpose—or two. One serious purpose is to say, very brazenly and loudly, "We told you so!" For two years before the war we made ourselves a nuisance, yes, even in these columns, by proclaiming that

there were not enough piers in the Thames, that when the enemy came there would be far too few. And were we right? Yes. We would weary you with no more details; but since May 1941, it can now be disclosed, there has been no pier longer than a tennis-court between Westminster and Greenwich: and the Admiral, our Admiral, Flag Officer-in-Charge, London, if he wished to embark, has had to motor—motor!—by road, a couple of miles from his Headquarters. A deplorable, degrading thing. And there is still no landing-place at the Tower, the true headquarters of London River.

So what? So that the captured U-boat, instead of parading at the Tower, under the Admiral's window, as she should, had to be brought up through the bridges to Westminster.

All the more glory to Westminster Pier, you say—and to Mr. Best—and Fred Harding—and Harry, whose surname we have forgotten—the Three Jolly Piermasters at the Port of the Heart of Empire! Well, you are quite right. That has been the story for four years. It can now be disclosed that in this conflict the Fleet has gone back to the great ways of King Alfred. Far—amazingly far—up the creeks and rivers of these islands, His Majesty's small ships of war have been lovingly built by His Majesty's villagers remote from the sea. Ready at last, choosing their tides, groping through the channels, creeping under the bridges, they have come down to the open waters and sped across the seas and oceans to engage the enemy.

Now, for one thing and another, on their way to sea, they have to stop here and there. And, because of the events aforesaid, one of the great stopping-places has been the aforesaid Westminster Pier. Gun-boats, Torpedo-boats, M.L.s, Landing-Craft This and Landing-Craft That, Air-Sea Rescue Boats—how many and fine and various craft have flung a heaving-line to Mr. Best, or one of his colleagues, or one of us, and secured for the night under the goggling eyes of the Embankment, and steamed away in the morning to seek the ocean and the E-boats—or come back, dingy and battered, with life-belts labelled "ANVERS", to be goggled at again, on their way up river for a refit—how many? We do not know. We were birds of passage too. But we guess that it was very many. One day under Boadicea's monument, the faithful man who sells postcards in that appallingly draughty corner said "Good-morning, Mr. H. More like Pompey* every day!" How right! And at the tail of this long naval procession this U-boat seems to come very fittingly and well. Our only sadness is that we were not there to see Mr. Best "take a line" and give this strange craft a few directions about her method of approach, about the "eddies" and the "set" and this and that. For the waters there have their own special mysteries and hold more problems than the open sea.

But there it is—the old pier—still afloat. The I.R.A. did not destroy it, as we expected—patrolling the snow—in the first "phoney" winter; and the Germans, for all their efforts, did not, as we expected, destroy it every night of all the other winters—and summers. It has been the host and harbour of Their Gracious Majesties, of other Kings, of Smuts, of Senators, of First Lords and Sea Lords, of Admirals and Generals, of the Dominions, and the Americans, of great men and fine craft and friendly flags from many places. Last comes the German U-boat, flying the White Ensign. Could there be more? There could. We wait now to see the good old fleet of "pleasure-steamer" crowding the brave old pier, and the people, bound no more to goggle from the bridge, sailing away in their own ships in their own waters again.

PS—All this was written before we read that the U-boat, at low water, had fallen sideways. It is not for us to comment upon this event, in a naval way; but, politically speaking, we may still say—*What about a new Tower Pier?*

A. P. H.

"I see we're allowed to spread alarm and despondency again!"



* Portsmouth

At the Play

"THE NIGHT AND THE MUSIC" .
(COLISEUM)

MR. ROBERT NESBITT, producer of the latest revue, has obviously the right manner for the Coliseum. To make any effect in this theatre you must splash at a ten-league canvas with brushes of comets' hair, and Mr. NESBITT glories in the exercise, filling his immense spaces with a whirl of movement and a fine foam of colour. He begins in a carnival's flourish, with processional interlude, and ends the evening (one to sadden the colour-blind) with an all-white dazzle, his stage blanched to frost and ivory and pearl. This is unashamedly a Big Spectacular Show, devised less for the ear than the eye. The Coliseum ("Welcome to the home of the London Philharmonic Orchestra," says Mr. VIC OLIVER gravely) is now itself again, and the dozen authors and composers must agree that the hour is Mr. NESBITT'S.

Resourcefully he brings Imperial Rome to the Coliseum—a most enlightening twenty minutes. Here Mr. OLIVER, fiddling around as Nero, assures us while the place goes up in smoke that there'll be a hot time in the old town to-night. Mr. OLIVER is hardly one of your great clowns of high fantastic invention, but he is always an ingratiating comedian, a lob of spirits with a puckered smile, a husky, purring friendliness, and a let's-all-play-at-something air that carries him in triumph over the dimmer passages. At present he is funniest when in agony with his infernal machine of a piano. (This is before a rebuke from the wandering voice of Schubert's ghost takes him to nobler things.) We like him too when, as often happens, he is turning a surprised gaze on the troubles of Mr. "SLIM" ALLAN, the eccentric Roland to his Oliver. Mr. ALLAN, as a crooner, sways like a fainting palm. Little goes right for him on the stage, but his uneasy grin survives all griefs, even an engagement in Mr. OLIVER'S opera company with its short swallow-flights of song.

We have ever to come back to Mr. NESBITT (and to Miss JOAN DAVIS,

who has arranged the dances and ensembles). Generously they offer New York in the 'eighties, a Swiss-miss serenade, and a masque of London graced by both Wren and dancing sparrow. There is also the strongest Redskin rally since *Rose Marie*. Mr. VAN PHILLIPS has written music for the Eagle Dance of the Hopi Indians, and Mr. NESBITT has crowded his stage with score upon score of braves

*Clad in all their richest raiment,
Robes of fur and belts of wampum,
Splendid with their paint and
plumage . . .*

This is the Coliseum at its most lavish.



RIVAL COMEDIANS

MR. VIC OLIVER (seated on music-stool)

We remember also the whirligig of the NINE AVALONS who live and move on roller-skates, and—from the first part of the evening—a noise that sounds like a sawmill in full excited blast. It is merely the hearty laughter of one of the Blackbirds, either Mr. WORTHY or Mr. JARRETT. J. C. T.

"THE CRIME OF MARGARET FOLEY"
(EMBASSY)

There is music too on the night of Tom Foley's murder—the brazen music of a fairground out in County Wicklow. Up at the big house Tom is being battered to death with a decanter as he sits in the old arm-chair. It is a peculiarly nasty murder committed by a peculiarly nasty young man, Kevin Ormond. Having been long a poor

exile from Erin, he returns—we gather, London-trained—to make a fortune in his own way by witchcraft of his wits.

Margaret Foley (later Margaret Ormond) breaks the Seventh Commandment. Her lover, given the wraith of a chance, would break the lot. So poisonous is he that we are eager to see him doomed, and we wait anxiously through the last act and a half until Inspector Boyle of the Civic Guard is ready to move. It takes a year, but "Retribution, like a poised hawk, comes swooping down upon the Wrong-Doer"—and we go home happy.

Mr. PERCY ROBINSON and Mr. TERENCE DE MARNEY are experienced

in these violent delights with their violent ends. The new melodrama is a cut-and-thrust venture in the horrific, roughly written but with plenty of theatrical spirit. Mr. JOHN FERNALD has staged it simply, and he has Miss JUDY KELLY to agonize, that good actor Mr. IAN FLEMING to detect, Mr. DE MARNEY himself to steep the stage in the villainous melancholy of the man in possession, and Mr. NOEL MORRIS to galumph (most acceptably) through the part of the well-meaning boor of a pig-farmer whose death clears the way for a new master of Dunncliffe.

Still, where would the play be without its butler? He is Mr. ARTHUR SINCLAIR, now with the look of a wise old owl, now with the eye of an affronted rooster, and now with the despairing patience of one who finds man and his follies incomprehensible.

It is a pity that *Dinny* has to be emotional, for in distress Mr. SINCLAIR'S voice slides into a slow and unearthly keening. In comedy he has always been able to enrich the barest line by his fondling and twirling of a phrase, and his use of the expressive pause. Without him Dunncliffe might sometimes be intolerable. As it is, we can leave the house safely in his charge: no caretaker government could be sounder, though this grand comedian must not be allowed to sit for ever in the butler's pantry. Surely an O'Casey revival is overdue? Few can see Mr. SINCLAIR without crowding memories of his "Captain" Boyle in *Juno and the Paycock* and of *Fluther Goode* in *The Plough and the Stars*.

J. C. T.



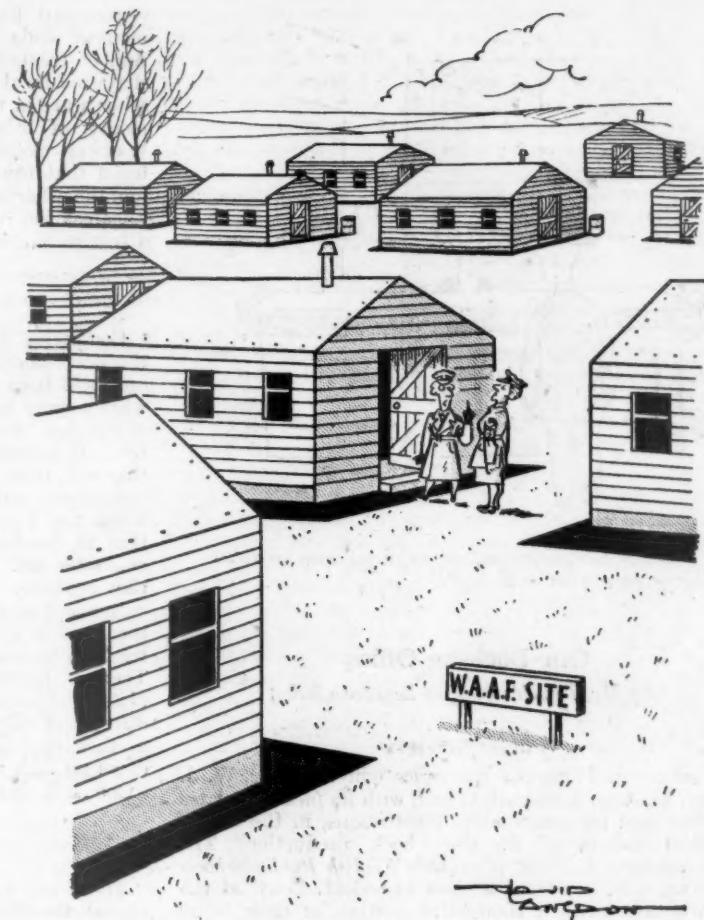
HANK YOU for your most generous support. Mr. Punch is deeply grateful to you all for enabling him to alleviate in a small degree the hardships of this devastating war.

The European war is won, but the women and children in the recently liberated countries will need warm clothing and plenty of it during the coming winter.

The Navy, Army, Air Force and Merchant Navy still have an immense amount to do in the war against Japan and will need socks, cigarettes and other little comforts to make life more tolerable.

Mr. Punch will continue his efforts to supply these needs until the cessation of hostilities with Japan. Your help is urgently needed. Please send to him at PUNCH COMFORTS FUND, 10 Bouverie St., London, E.C.4.

Registered under the War Charities Act, 1940



Those Columns!

FOUNTAIN pen, nib imperceptibly split, property niece naval officer D.S.O. (engineering branch): can be viewed weekdays, not before 7 A.M., or photograph would be sent: £10, alternatively would consider exchange for small unused sponge. N.O. Niece, Flat 527 (no lift), Topgallant Mansions, Driftwood Square.

Piece visibly old lace: cannot be viewed under any circumstances. £50 cash down. Box 000.

Couple lately returned Masangalay Plantations offer pull weight in exchange amenities life sporting, jolly, and rural district; wife equally at home hen-house, scullery, boudoir: while husband, never desirous fritter time away, is nimble with fret-saw; please forward frank personal revelations to Cottonstop, "Malaria," Swettenham.

Lady willing dispose immensely valuable Sable Cape: unwilling reply inquiries as to reason. L.S.D., "Fair-weather," Tinselton.

Seven yards rich biscuit pre-austerity plush: offers? Also admiral's pre-last-war cocked hat and epaulettes, together with telescope and portrait sea-going ancestor (4 length, background of

frigate), whole guaranteed lend atmosphere least promising dining-room: best offer secures, regardless marine pretensions prospective buyer. Fence, 123 Old Brixton Road, Tootwick.

Clockwork engine and tender, gauge 0, L.M.S. line, practically free rust, key will probably turn up. Hurry! while owner still at school. Box No. only 222.

Mother offers her all, and includes 1 pair Wellington boots, in exchange loan capable Nannie 1 week to avert (or postpone) imminent mental collapse. Most probably too late anyhow. "Nuts Birth-rate," The Rambling-Cove.

3 lb. guava jelly (as new); 3 toothbrushes (new, good as); 1 capacious dust-bin; a little bit of elastic; Spode

soap (or butter) dish, well riveted; frame excellent tennis-racket; ½ super salmon rod; G violin string; 1 ostrich egg (blown); bold check overcoat (scarcely visited by moth); purchaser's obligation to remove whole collection in dust-bin with maximum rapidity as soon as deal is effected. Mrs. Ransack, Lastlegs, Dustley Heap.

Lady, not yet impoverished, but near-distressed, would dearly love Roof over her Head (if not too much to ask); type immaterial, if weather-proof; write, wire, telephone, or carrier-pigeon. "Wanderlust Hell," Poste Restante.

Tiny bunch bananas and minute sealed bottle "Irresistible Night." Steady now!



"Strictly between you and me we've got more cigarettes than we know what to do with."

Our Booking-Office

(By Mr. Punch's Staff of Learned Clerks)

Public Schools

"BRITAIN in Pictures," the series edited by Mr. W. J. Turner, has been a delightful oasis, with its pleasant plates in colour and black-and-white illustrations, in the bibliographical Sahara of war-time book production. The latest volume, Mr. REX WARNER's *English Public Schools* (COLLINS, 4/6), combines a clear historical sketch of the public schools with a thoughtful analysis of their faults and merits, past and present. Mr. WARNER narrates how schools which had been founded as day schools for the children of the poor were gradually transformed into boarding-schools for the children of the rich. With the growth of the moneyed interest the classical education which had helped poor children to high positions in Church and State steadily decreased in practical importance, and by the close of the eighteenth century was regarded by the boys as a useless irritation and by the masters as a battle-ground on which victory could be secured only by a strong arm and an iron will. The great headmasters of this time ruled by terror, and often provoked reprisals. Even Keate of Eton, the most formidable of all, was pelted with rotten eggs, and on one occasion found a huge mastiff locked up in his desk. Arnold of Rugby was the chief of the reformers who in the first half of the nineteenth century renovated the public school system; but as the century advanced the religious element in education, to Arnold all-important, gradually dissolved. "If I were called upon," he said, "to name what spirit of evil predominantly deserved the name of anti-Christ, I should name the spirit of chivalry . . . because it is in direct opposition to the impartial justice of the Gospel, and its comprehensive feeling of equal brotherhood." By the close of the century chivalry, expressed in games and the team-spirit, had entirely displaced Arnold's evangelizing ideal. Gentlemen, not Christians, were what the public schools now

endeavoured to produce, and gentlemen of a somewhat stereotyped kind, excellent public servants rather than men of wide sympathies and interests. "The Golden Age of complacency," Mr. WARNER writes, "was rudely shattered by the first World War." At present the public schools are in the melting pot, where they have of course plenty of other things to keep them company. Mr. WARNER closes a fine essay with an expression of his belief that the valuable elements in them will emerge to join the other safeguards provided by the English character "against the dangers of a bureaucracy with low aims or a totalitarianism with hysterical ones."

H. K.

Behind the Scenes

Comparing a first edition of *Letters from England* with the posthumous *How They Do It* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 7/6), one looks back on the career of KAREL CAPEK and wonders what a more humane age than our own would have made of a writer "so witty," as the old song says, "and so graceful." It is perhaps unfair to discern more cheerful clowning than wit, more journalistic adequacy than charm, in three newspaper articles on the production of Newspapers, Films and Plays; and in any case the translators warn us that in Czechoslovakia these activities have a collective character and are more ideological and less personal than they are here. This the text bears out, the author actually suggesting, as a feature that accounts for its unpopularity, that, unlike everything else about a newspaper, criticism tends to become "a kind of reservation for individualists." There is, however, plenty of robust satire in M. CAPEK's picture of collective art at work—his pages on the *via dolorosa* of the "story" to the screen are almost strident in their derision. And now and again the early CAPEK crops up with a country adage such as this on journalism: "One claw, and you've got the whole bird."

H. P. E.

To a Future

The world has reached, or indeed has probably already passed, the climax of nationalism. Tolerable as an institution of the later Middle Ages only because it was based on the idea of monarchy as personal possession, peace resting more or less securely on the pledged word of kings, and continuing with some show of plausibility for nearly a hundred years after the Napoleonic era mainly because of this country's economic autocracy, nationalism, with its underlying assumption that moral obligations cease to be binding on any group of human beings able to claim personification as a sovereign State, became wholly unendurable about the turn of the century, with results that we have seen. So says Professor E. H. CARR in a short study, *Nationalism and After* (MACMILLAN, 3/6), and whatever he says will always be studied with respectful attention. He points out that the progress of the socialist ideal has tended to narrow national limits rather than to forward the federation of the world in one common rising standard of well-being, and classes that advance with the cutting up of the earth's surface into smaller and smaller unit States as having tended to produce those totalitarian symptoms from which we suffer. He thinks unqualified nationalism is at last rather losing ground, and looks forward with reasonable hopefulness to those experiments in internationalism now emerging, desiring to see nationalism take its place only as one of many varying loyalties overlapping and jointly strengthening a genuine human fellowship. As always, he is lucid, sane and in the main optimistic.

C. C. P.

Miss Peverence Regrets.

It was Oscar Wilde, if one remembers rightly, who maintained that the artist created types and society conformed to them—a theory which might possibly explain the gangsters and glamour-girls of our village greens. Miss HESTER W. CHAPMAN, going one better, has presented a Victorian novelist of such creative power that real people are impelled to work out her plots in actual life. She sees her entourage as "characters," and they get like that. One of Miss Blanche Peverence's fans has already, it seems, committed a suicide modelled on the climax of one of Miss Peverence's novels; so the novelist renounces fiction and betakes herself to France, where, in the household of a Corsican millionaire, she is required, as lady *gouvernante*, to shape his wild daughter to the requirements of aristocratic matrimony. Here she discovers a Second-Empire-Castle-of-Otranto *décor*, a reluctant bride, an unappetising fiancé, the fiancé's middle-aged mistress and a young exiled Danish lover for the girl, all ready to hand. The result is, as the jacket suggests, a pseudo-Victorian three-decker. *I Will Be Good* (SECKER AND WARBURG, 10/6) is cleverly outlined and opulently filled out; but the typical *longueurs*, which occur about mid-way, are harder to surmount than those of Wilkie Collins and Miss Braddon. H. P. E.

Norman O'Neill

Mr. DEREK HUDSON, who recently wrote an interesting account of Thomas Barnes of *The Times*, has now brought out a biography of his father-in-law, the well-known theatrical composer Norman O'Neill (QUALITY PRESS, 12/6). As Mr. HUDSON has been assisted in his work by his mother-in-law, wife and uncle by marriage, he has been able to do full justice to Norman O'Neill's charm, from childhood on through a life which, except for a certain amount of ill-health, appears to have been unusually tranquil and successful. A gifted and beautiful child, Norman O'Neill, whose father was a popular Victorian painter, passed his early years in Kensington, in a house once occupied by Thackeray. He studied music in Germany, and his first important orchestral work, produced when he was only twenty-six, was conducted at the Queen's Hall by Sir Henry Wood, to whom it was dedicated. A little later he was writing the incidental music for Martin-Harvey's production of *Hamlet*. From this first success he passed to the musical directorship of the Haymarket Theatre, where he remained for over twenty years, applying his talent to works which ranged from *King Lear* to the *Blue Bird* and from *The Gods of the Mountain* to Ibsen's *Pretenders*, a play which did not particularly appeal to him, for, Mr. HUDSON says, he lacked instinctive sympathy with the rugged warriors of thirteenth-century Norway. His favourite composer was Delius, and it is a great tribute to O'Neill's charm that Delius, a difficult, inaccessible man, had a great affection for him. H. K.

Long March

We have heard a good deal about General Wingate's first Burma Expedition in 1943, but we are not likely to get anything better than Major BERNARD FERGUSSON's story of the column he commanded. *Beyond the Chindwin* (COLLINS, 10/6) is a grand book, and the author brings poetry and humour to the telling of his tale of a ten-week march, mainly through jungle and hindered by danger, pain, loss, discomfort and hunger. It is, as Field Marshal WAVELL writes in his foreword, "a book of high endeavour and gallant enterprise," adding, "There is in the endurance

and fellowship of the British soldier an abiding quality of humour and almost of tenderness that has made that race indestructible." It is this combination of traits that makes the story noteworthy. The author has, in common with many great leaders of the war, a strong sense of the past as it shines through the present, and an abiding faith. When he, with two others, lost the column and found it by a miracle he wrote, "I have never been more aware of God's mercy." He had to make terrible decisions, particularly when some men had to be left behind on a sandbank after a river crossing, in order that those of stronger spirit should survive. He felt "an almost criminal responsibility" towards the family of his great friend, who was killed obeying his orders. There is neither space nor necessity to mention incidents of the expedition, since the author's own awareness gives them life and significance. There have been many excellent war books, but this is unmistakably a great one. B. E. B.

Reconstruction

Professor CARL BECKER, as Mr. AGAR says in a foreword to this interesting book, is one of America's leading historians. What he says in *Making a Better World* (HAMISH HAMILTON, 8/6) deserves at any rate close attention. He opens with a chapter on "What is Wrong with the World we Have?" and finds plenty. In peace-time, he writes, millions of men are out of work, whereas when war comes we have not men enough to do the necessary work. As though the simplest way to abolish one wrong thing—unemployment—is to practise another wrong thing—war—on a grand scale. Then he analyses the reasons that brought the U.S.A. into a second European war in twenty-five years. Mr. BECKER makes many good points, expressed in racy language, and he has sound views, to our thinking, where some of his fellow-countrymen are apt to go astray. Imperialism, for example. He admits that the British Empire has had its failings, as what great State has not? But in respect to political wisdom, restraint in exercise of authority, and contribution to the spread of political freedom in the world, it does not suffer by comparison with any Great Power in ancient or modern times. He has, too, a good word to say for the much-abused League of Nations. L. W.

Mr. Punch welcomes the appearance of Mr. BASIL BOOTHROYD's *Are Sergeants Human?* (ALLEN AND UNWIN, 5/-), a collection of sketches of R.A.F. life, most of which have appeared in these pages.



"Quite frankly, I can see no future for this modern stuff."

Over the Sticks

"ONLY a few weeks remain," began the Head, "before the exams. We've scratched a few nominations; what about the rest?"

"Pretty average form, I think," said Mr. Burt, First Assistant. "Should stay the course."

"I'm worried about Redfern."

"Redfern? One of our strongest hopes, isn't he?"

"I reckon he'll beat Milford's Love-lock," observed the French Master.

"He's off his lunches."

The staff meeting looked grave.

"Does he take his milk?" asked Mr. Jones (History and Salvage).

"I believe," said Milward, Music and Milk Master, "that the lack of straws puts him off."

"Verify," ordered the Head, "and see Miller, the farmer, about a bale of straw."

Milward nodded zealously.

"Anybody else?"

"Goodwood," broke in the French Master, "I'm not easy about him."

"His Maths. are all right," observed the Maths. Master.

"He's brilliant, but highly strung. My opinion is he's not been the same since we scratched Kingsley."

"Kingsley was no good. We just had to drop him to 5c."

"Goodwood misses him. They sat together."

"Short of promoting Kingsley again, I don't see what we can do."

Burt shook his head decisively. "Kingsley's definitely a non-starter."

"His Maths. are all right," said the Maths. Master.

The Head looked round the meeting. "Any suggestions?"

"Mr. Seeley's often good with temperamental entries," said Burt.

The Head turned invitingly to the Games Master.

"Only if it's a physical trouble," replied Seeley. "Still, I know Goodwood. Something in the way of a run each evening before bed—a short cross-country followed by a good rub-down. Settle his nerves. Make him sleep. Often puts them on their feet again."

"A good idea," said the Head. "Mr. Jones?"

The History Master was making disapproving noises.

"This run. How long will it take?" "Half an hour. Forty minutes, perhaps."

"And what about his homework?"

"That's a point," interjected the Latin Master.

"Couldn't we allow him that?"

"They lose enough time already, with tea and supper."

"And getting home," added the Latin Master.

"Still," decided the Head, "I think the laxer regimen, the change, would more than compensate. See him, will you, Seeley?"

The Games Master nodded. Mr. Jones shook a mistrustful head. "They wouldn't allow it at Milford High," he muttered.

"There's one thing bothers me," said Mr. Briggs (Geography and Prayers). "I've been over the course with my lot, specimen papers, past questions, everything. They know the fences and the pit-falls, but I'm wondering are there any changes in the rules? A fresh procedure might put them right out."

"Such as—?"

"The questions in a different order. Different colours on the map."

"That would be a serious matter," replied the Head soberly. "The Stewards have not informed me of any change, but you must guard against it. Prepare them for radical innovations. Alter the colour of their ink."

"I'll do that," said Briggs.

"No difficulty with the Maths.," said the Maths. Master. "They're all right there."

"Is there any general change we might profitably make in their training?" asked the Head. "What do you say, Mr. Burt?"

"I was at Milford High the other day," began Burt.

There was a general stir at this venturing among rivals.

"They go in for intensive training."

"We beat them by one School Certificate last time," said the Head swiftly.

"Yes, but they've got a new thing. They cut morning-break and devoted the ten minutes to learning dates."

"Ah!" groaned Mr. Jones from his gloom. "They would."

"But they found it didn't pay. Candidates got morning fag. Some lost weight. So they had another idea and chalked up dates on the playground wall. They learn subconsciously as they run around. 'Swot as you trot,' they call it."

There was a silence.

"Brilliant gifts perversely used," commented Mr. Flint (Science and Savings).

The Head sat decisively up.

"We'll go one better," he announced. "We'll print formulae inside every lunch cup. Each draught will bring fresh knowledge to light. I might call it 'Think as you drink.'"

There was general applause.

"We have the stock," went on the Head in ringing tones. "They are groomed and trained to a hair's-breadth. If they enter at all they shall enter as favourites."

"Hear! hear!" cried the staff.

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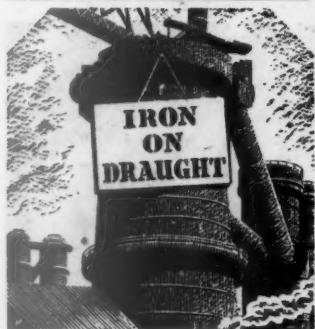


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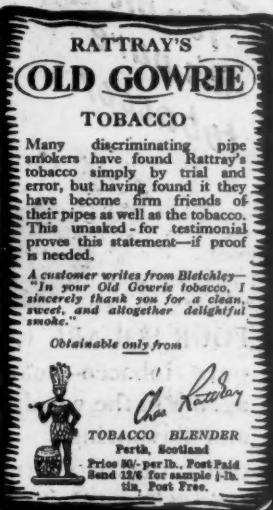
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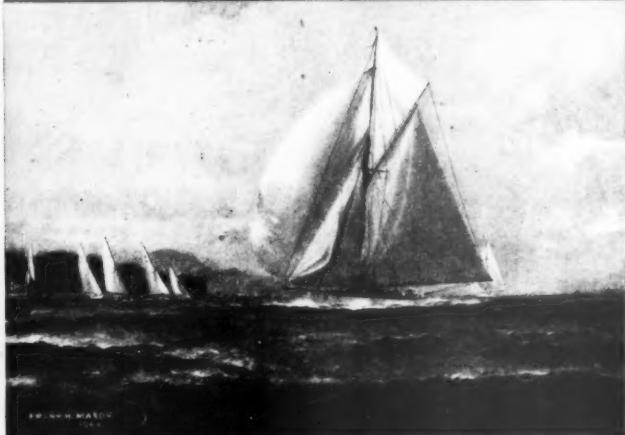
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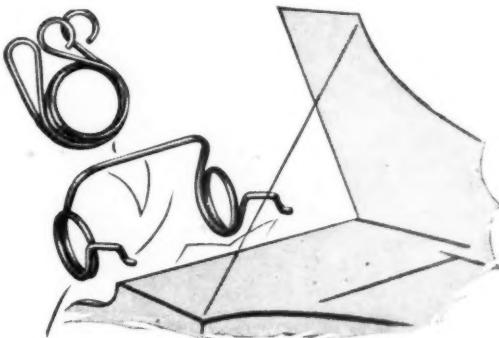


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